

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAJ-01 EB-07 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-07 COME-00

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R 180925Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1680

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 12490

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, JAPAN

SUBJECT: JAPAN-USSR RELATIONS: DOKO MEETING WITH BREZHNEV

SUMMARY: AT CORDIAL AUG 13 MEETING, BREZHNEV TOLD KEIDANREN (FEDERATION OF ECONOMIC ORGANIZATIONS) PRESIDENT DOKO THAT SOVIET UNION WANTED TO DEVELOP LONGER PERSPECTIVE ON SIBERIAN DEVELOPMENT AND ESTABLISH CABINET LEVEL ORGANIZATION TO COORDINATE ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP. DOKO RESPONDED IN EFFECT THAT THIS KIND OF DEVELOPMENT WOULD HAVE TO AWAIT IMPROVEMENT IN POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP AND URGED BREZHNEV TO VISIT JAPAN FOR THIS PURPOSE. BREZHNEV NON-COMMITTAL ON VISIT. FONOFF INTERPRETS BREZHNEV MEETING AS SIGN THAT SOVIETS HAVE REASSESSED VALUE OF JAPAN AS ECONOMIC PARTNER NOW THAT OIL SHOCK AND RECESSION SUCCESSFULLY PASSED. TIMING OF GESTURE DICTATED IN PART BY IMPROVED ATMOSPHERE OF SOVIET JAPANESE RELATIONS RESULTING FROM FONMIN MIYAZAWA'S STATEMENTS ON PRC AND IN PART BY DESIRE TO ADD NEW LIFE TO FLAGGING JOINT SIBERIAN DEVELOPMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF BREZHNEV-DOKO MEETING

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AUGUST 13 PROVIDED EMBOFFS BY FONOFF'S NEW FIRST

EUROPEAN DIV DEPDIR AOKI ON BASIS OF CABLE FROM MOSCOW, AND BY SOURCES ON KEIDANREN STAFF. BREZHNEV DID MOST OF TALKING DURING MORE THAN TWO-HOUR MEETING, STUCK ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY TO SUBJECT OF US-JAPAN-PRC ECONOMIC COOPERATION IN SIBERIA, AND AVOIDED POLITICAL STATEMENTS EXCEPT TO EXPRESS PLEASURE WITH FONMIN MIYAZAWA'S RECENT STATEMENTS ON PRC (TOKYO 10983). REVIEWING PROGRESS OF JOINT DEVELOPMENT IN DETAIL (BREZHNEV SURPRISED JAPANESE WITH HIS GRASP, MENTIONING SEVERAL PROJECTS BY NAME) CPSU SECRETARY GENERAL TOLD JAPANESE THAT PROJECT BY PROJECT APPROACH WAS NOT ENOUGH. HE URGED THAT EACH COUNTRY ADOPT A LONG-RANGE PERSPECTIVE WITHIN WHICH SPECIFIC PROJECTS COULD BE CONSIDERED. MORE SPECIFICALLY, USSR PROPOSED ESTABLISHING JOINT CABINET LEVEL ECONOMIC COMMITTEE, AND NEGOTIATING GOVT-TO-GOVT CREDIT AGREEMENT.

2. DOKO'S RESPONSE TO BREZHNEV'S STRONG PLEA FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION WAS ESSENTIALLY POLITICAL IN NATURE. HE TOLD SOVIET LEADER THAT JAPAN INTERESTED IN JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SIBERIA. HE WOULD PASS BREZHNEV'S MESSAGE BACK TO JAPANESE GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS CIRCLES. BEFORE THE PROSPECTS FOR JOINT PROJECTS COULD BE IMPROVED, HOWEVER, MORE ATTENTION WOULD HAVE TO BE PAID TO POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE FEELINGS OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION WOULD HAVE TO BE AMELIORATED. WITH THIS IN MIND, DOKO EXPRESSED THE HOPE ON BEHALF OF PRIME MINISTER MIKI THAT BREZHNEV WOULD VISIT JAPAN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

3. THERE WAS NO DOUBT, DOKO CONTINUED, THAT LONGER TERM PERSPECTIVE NEEDED IN DEVELOPMENT PLANNING. JAPANESE WERE WELL ACQUAINTED WITH SOVIET VIEWS ON SUBJECT THROUGH NUMEROUS CONVERSATIONS WITH SOVIET COUNTERPARTS. TO SOME EXTENT, A PERSPECTIVE HAD ALREADY BEEN CREATED, PROJECT BY PROJECT. JAPAN HOPED TO DEVELOP COOPERATIVE ECONOMIC TIES AT THE POINT WHERE BOTH SOVIET AND JAPANESE NEEDS MEET.

4. BREZHNEV'S REPLY TO DOKO'S INVITATION WAS
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NONCOMMITTAL. HE WANTED VERY MUCH TO COME TO JAPAN AND WOULD CONSULT THROUGH APPROPRIATE CHANNELS ON QUESTION OF TIMING. HE JOKED THAT HE HAD SO MANY INVITATIONS TO VISIT ABROAD THAT TO ACCEPT THEM ALL WOULD LEAVE HIM NO TIME IN MOSCOW. THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE CONVERSATIONS WAS CANDID, EVEN JOVIAL, WITH BREZHNEV IN TOP FORM.

5. WHAT DOKO WAS TRYING TO TELL BREZHNEV DELICATELY, AOKI NOTED, WAS THAT JAPANESE COULD ENVISAGE NO MAJOR PROGRESS ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT THE SOVIET UNION MAKING SOME CONCILIATORY MOVE ON THE NORTHERN TERRITORIES ISSUE. EMBOFF REPLIED THAT BREZHNEV'S RELUCTANCE TO COMMIT HIMSELF SUGGESTED THAT HE GOT THE POINT.

6. COMMENTING ON BROADER SIGNIFICANCE OF DOKO VISIT, AOKI SAID IT REPRESENTED "THIRD THOUGHTS" ABOUT JAPAN, THE SECOND THOUGHTS BEING EARLIER PESSIMISM THAT JAPAN'S VALUE AS A TRADING AND INVESTMENT PARTNER HAD BEEN FUNDAMENTALLY ALTERED BY OIL CRISIS AND RECESSION. POLITICALLY, THE SOVIETS SEE THE JAPANESE "INCHING TOWARD A PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TREATY WITH THE PRC." AT THE MOMENT, PROGRESS HAS STOPPED AND THE ATMOSPHERE FOR BETTER RELATIONS IMPROVED BY FOREIGN MINISTER'S RECENT "ANTI-CHINESE" REMARKS. FURTHERMORE, DOKO HAD BEEN TO PEKING EARLIER THIS YEAR, AND THE INVITATION FROM MOSCOW GAVE THE RUSSIANS A CHANCE TO BALANCE ACCOUNTS.

7. THE MEETING WITH BREZHNEV HAD NOT COME AS GREAT SURPRISE, AOKI CONTINUED. JAPANESE HAD BEEN INFORMED THAT SOVIET PREMIER KOSYGIN, WHOM DOKO HAD EXPECTED TO SEE, WAS ILL (THOUGH NOT SERIOUSLY SO, WE WERE TOLD BY SOVIET EMBASSY CONTACT HERE). NEVERTHELESS, PROTOCOL DID NOT REQUIRE BREZHNEV TO MAKE EITHER HIMSELF OR HIS DACHA AVAILABLE. THAT HE DID SO SEEMED TO JAPANESE SIDE AN INDICATION OF SOVIET DESIRE TO MAKE THE VISIT A SUCCESS AND ADD SOME LIFE TO AN ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP IN SIBERIA THAT HAS FLAGGED IN RECENT MONTHS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TOKYO12490
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760316-0906
From: TOKYO JOINT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760840/aaaabizt.tel
Line Count: 155
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 MAY 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <11 MAY 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JAPAN-USSR RELATIONS: DOKO MEETING WITH BREZHNEV SUMMARY: AT CORDIAL AUG 13 MEETING, BREZHNEV TOLD KEIDANREN (FEDERATION OF ECONOMIC ORGANIZATIONS) PRESIDENT D
TAGS: PFOR, UR, JA, (DOKO), (BREZHNEV, LEONID I)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006